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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 000682

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR CA/OCS/CI AND EUR/WE  
G/DRL/IRF FOR NANCY HEWETT  
NSC FOR JUAN ZARATE  
DEA FOR PAUL CRAINE, MICHAEL BRAUN AND THOMAS HARRIGAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/18/2018  
TAGS: [CJAN](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SP](#) [KOCI](#)  
SUBJECT: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION'S JUNE 18 MEETING WITH  
SPANISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE:AL-KASSAR  
EXTRADITION, CARRASCOSA CASE AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

REF: A. MADRID 640

- [B](#). MADRID 137
- [C](#). 2006 MADRID 2241
- [D](#). 2007 MADRID 2093

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In a June 18 meeting with the Spanish Secretary of State for Justice Julio Perez-Hernandez (Deputy Justice Minister equivalent), the DCM thanked the GOS for their cooperation in the extradition of the Syrian arms dealer and alleged terrorist Monzer Al-Kassar. The DCM also addressed the ongoing Carrascosa child abduction case and the USG's continued interest in religious freedom issues. End Summary.

//Al-Kassar Extradition//

[1](#)2. (C) The DCM met with Spanish Secretary of State for Justice Julio Perez-Hernandez on June 18 to thank him for Spanish government cooperation in the June 13 extradition to the U.S. (ref A) of arms dealer Monzer Al-Kassar. The DCM noted that the extradition was an example of exemplary judicial coordination. Perez-Hernandez explained that due to the political sensitivities, the Al-Kassar case was handled carefully, with extreme attention given to ensure all Spanish due-process procedures and appeals were provided. The DCM responded that the United States' case against Al-Kassar was strong and assured Perez-Hernandez that Al-Kassar would have a fair trial in the United States and enjoy the same due-process assurances Spain provided.

//Carrascosa Case//

[1](#)3. (C) The DCM and Perez-Hernandez also discussed the on-going case of Maria Jose Carrascosa, a Spanish citizen from Valencia held in a New Jersey prison since November 2006 for contempt of court in connection with a child custody case (refs B, C and D). The case has received extensive negative attention, with the Spanish press often airing a photo of the "mother in chains." The DCM briefed Perez-Hernandez that the U.S. judges were poised to travel to the Hague to meet with their Spanish counterparts (ref B). Perez-Hernandez noted that the Spanish judges had requested official permission to meet at the Hague, which had unfortunately delayed the process. The DCM informed Perez-Hernandez that Carrascosa's criminal trial for parental kidnapping would begin June 23 and that if convicted she faced a potentially stiff sentence.

//Religious Freedom//

14. (C) The DCM stressed the importance of religious freedom to the USG and its citizens and urged the GOS to grant full benefits and privileges to those religions (Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Buddhists) recently granted "notorio arraigo" status (in effect, recognition as a religion). Perez-Hernandez suggested that the "legislative project" discussed at the February meeting (ref B) had been completed, but stated that interagency approval within the GOS would be complicated. Perez-Hernandez explained that Spain's Ministry of Economy's action was pivotal, specifically their analysis as to the potential revenue loss associated with granting the religious groups tax-exempt status. The DCM said that he planned to meet with the Spanish Secretary of State for Property and Budgets Carlos Ocana regarding the issue, and Perez-Hernandez agreed that this USG push would be helpful.  
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